104-10129-10342

APPROVED FOR RELEASE 1993
CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

JFK ACT RELEASE

TO : Director, Domestic Contact Service
Attn: Carroll Delaney

SL-134-69
DATE: 19 February 1969

FROM : Chief, St. Louis Office

SUBJECT: Condemnation of CIA by Dr. Nels F. S. Ferre, Prominent Theologian

1. From 9-12 Feb 69, the Southern Baptist Convention Directors of State Student Departments from 18-19 states held a regional meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. During an address at the conference, the Rev. Dr. Nels F. S. Ferre, prominent theologian and publicist of Andover Newton Theological Seminary, now associated with Wooster (Ohio) College, expressed his concern with the growing power of the CIA in the US. As an example, he said that the Agency was "directly responsible" for the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Senator Robert Kennedy, and had been involved in the death of President John F. Kennedy.

2. As his rationalization for the King assassination, Ferre claimed that the Johnson Administration had become concerned that King would lead another massive "march on Washington" during an election year, and therefore had ordered the Agency to murder King. In an aside, he said that the Agency was quite chagrined when their "brother service", Scotland Yard, had arrested their hired assassin, James Earl Ray, after CIA had believed he had been safely spirited abroad. Ferre's rationalizations for the other assassinations were not given. Ferre is an ordained Congregational minister who has a PhD from Harvard.

3. Because of his prominence--he is listed in "Who's Who"--, Ferre's remarks apparently were not challenged by the Baptist student directors who appeared to be quite concerned by the charges. These directors are responsible for the Southern Baptist activities on all university and college campuses in their respective states, primarily in the southern and border states. In the past some DCS offices, including the St. Louis office, have dealt with them regarding the procurement of foreign student lists.

4. This information is forwarded as being of possible interest. Apparently Ferre's remarks were not reported in the local St. Louis newspapers.

I sent copies of this memo to FOS and OP/Recruitment Branch for their info.

JOHN L. SCHUBERT

JWRardin/ec

File:
Rev. J. Kenneth Bryant
American Youth Foundation
3460 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63139

OS/EAB
26 Feb 69